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The story of Tran Thi Gung sparked various types of emotion in me as I read her account of being the only women in an aggressive guerrilla unit near Cu Chi. What caught my attention was how frank, honest and precise her stories of combat were. I didn't feel as though she was bragging or trying to find her identity through her story. Although she is still broken from the tragic losses of her friends and comrades, she was able to portray war from the side that many Americans would rather disregard. She made very valid points, and brought to light issues that force one to look at the "big picture." One specific example that caught my attention, was when she informed the interviewer of how she noticed when she shot one American others would rush to his aid which made them "sitting ducks." She reveals that her unit adapted this cruel tactic, "From then on we knew that if we just shot one American soldier others would rush to him and then we could shoot many more." I believe that the majority of people have a reactionary response that can be hateful anytime one hears both sides of war (especially when it's your country being the recipient of tactical defeat). It's hard to sustain neutrality when one's ancestors are involved. Gung states that, "In the first battle against the Americans I shot so many GIs I was awarded a decoration with the title "Valiant Destroyer of American Infantrymen"". Once again, as an American I must fight urges of nationalism to view the story objectively, and that's what stood out to me personally and brought my attention to this particular account. Gung exposed my bias feelings with an excellent conclusion as she argued that, "If I went to America and killed people there, I would feel very sorry and guilty. Since the Americans came to my country I don't feel guilty." I don't agree with Gung for many reasons, however, I believe she presents a good point that Americans were on her land, in her neighborhoods, shooting at her loved ones. When one can imagine the

places that they love in their communities being toyed with by an invading force, it's easier to see through Tran Thi Gung's eyes.

The most Disappointing story was the story told by Henry Prunier. The reason it was the most disappointing is because it revealed how easy it would have been for a peaceful and constructive resolution to problems in Vietnam. The efforts of the OSS were well received by Vietnam. When they arrived Prunier mentions that "there was a big decorated archway that said, "Welcome to Our American Friends." That same evening they had a big feast for us. They slaughtered a calf and served us beer." As Prunier continues to tell his story, it's very evident that he holds a special place in his heart for the Vietnamese people. He seemed troubled that Americans at the time didn't understand that the heart of the Vietnamese was towards independence more than communism. Prunier discusses direct conversations with Ho Chi Minh and states that Ho Chi Minh said, "you'd be welcome to come back anytime. At one point in the conversation someone asked him if he was a communist and he said, "Yes I am a communist, but there's no reason why we can't be friends, why we can't live together." What is astounding is that this is the leader of the Vietnem opening up a door of negotiation that U.S. officials did not take advantage of. Throughout the text it seems as though the OSS opened several doors that could have been avenues toward peace and alliance, however the U.S. did not take advantage of them. If the U.S. used the influential momentum it gained from the OSS millions of lives would have been spared.

It was very difficult for me to find a positive or up-lifting story as I read over such disturbing material. However, the story of Ngo Vinh Long was inspirational because it's a story of overcoming adversity and doing what one thinks is right even if it puts one's life on the line. Long at first helped U.S. generals draw out maps of South Vietnam and became an integral part of U.S. strategy. But after seeing the injustices placed on the Vietnamese people as a whole he switched from being an

advocate to a protester. Already being wounded in battle, shot at by multiple militias, and threatened by the U.S., he kept his dignity and applied to Harvard. Long recalls, "Many of my American friends, some of whom worked for the CIA, said, "Long, you should get the hell out of here because if you don't one of these days you'll be arrested." So I applied to Harvard University and was accepted." After being accepted he continued to advise top government officials of the great mistake a full-scale war would be in Vietnam. What inspired me about this man's story is how relentless he was through so many struggles, and how he fought for what he believed was right, no matter who the opposition was.

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